

**COMMUNITY INITIATIVE OF
ARKANSAS
REQUEST FOR APPLICATION
2013 - 2014**

Arkansas Department of Human Services



**Division of
Community Service
and Nonprofit Support**

**Sherry Middleton, Director
Edet Frank, Assistant Director & CFO
Arkansas Department of Human Services
Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support**

**PO Box 1437 Slot S230
Little Rock, AR 72203-1437
Phone: 501-682-7540
FAX: 501-682-6752
TDD: 501-682-1605**

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE OF ARKANSAS

The Community Initiative of Arkansas (CIA) is a gateway program that provides organizations the opportunity to enhance their educational and health-related services by engaging AmeriCorps members. CIA AmeriCorps members will leverage additional volunteers to mentor, conduct healthy living programs/activities and participate in service projects for disadvantaged youth in Arkansas.

CIA will receive a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service through the Arkansas Service Commission (ASC) which will fund the placement of AmeriCorps Members at selected host sites. One to three AmeriCorps members will serve at each host site. CIA has no obligation to provide additional funding in connection with the award in subsequent years. *These funds will be provided to selected host sites on a reimbursement basis.*

The release of this Request For Application (RFA) does not constitute an acceptance of any offer, nor does such release in any way obligate Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support/Community Initiative of Arkansas (DCSNS/CIA) to execute a sub-grant with any applicant. DCSNS/CIA reserves the right to accept, reject, or negotiate any or all offers on the basis of the evaluation criteria contained in this document. The final decision to award a sub-grant with any applicant rests solely with DCSNS/CIA.

Background Information

The Corporation for National and Community Service

When faced with challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, crime and environmental problems, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of citizens. Today, the Corporation for National and Community Service carries on that tradition by working with governor-appointed state commissions, nonprofits, faith-based groups, schools, and other civic organizations to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages to serve their communities. The Corporation's three major service initiatives are AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps.

To learn more about the Corporation for National and Community Service visit www.cns.gov.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps, the domestic Peace Corps, engages approximately 75,000 Americans in intensive, results-driven service. Many AmeriCorps members are selected by and serve with local and national organizations like Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Boys and Girls Clubs. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act has determined that by 2017 over 250,000 individuals will serve annually as AmeriCorps members.

Host Site Responsibilities

Provide non-federal cash to cover 24% of support costs per member

- \$3,146.00 toward living allowance for full time members or \$1573 for half time members
- \$241.00 toward FICA for full time members or \$120 for half time members
- Approximately \$94.00 of worker's compensation
- Approximately \$455.00 of member health care for full time members
- \$2,200.00 additional documented match (cash/in-kind) for operating costs
- Supply the following items: office or desk space, access to a computer, internet, phone, fax, copier, etc.
- Implement the National Performance Measures outlined in this RFA
- Initiate background checks (AR State Police, FBI check and National Sex Offender Registry) before the AmeriCorps member begins his or her term of service
- Complete Quarterly Program Progress Reports
- Complete time sheets/approve time in My Service Log
- Submit monthly invoices with supporting documentation
- Attend ASC trainings
- Direct and supervise AmeriCorps members
- Provide transportation to and from CIA sponsored trainings and events
- If selected, site supervisors must attend orientation prior to the start of the program year (site provides transportation)

Host Site Benefits

- A full time or half time person, or persons, to serve at your organization addressing education and healthy living through mentoring and health programs/activities
- Access to state and national technical assistance providers
- Federal cash reimbursement to cover 76% of member support costs
- Increased community volunteer participation

Required Activities for an AmeriCorps Member

- ✓ Mentoring and/or Healthy Living Programs/Activities
- ✓ Recruiting volunteers
- ✓ Planning and implementing service projects

Eligible Organizations

Any nonprofit, foundation, state agency, tribal/local government, school, school district or faith-based organization in good standing with the State of Arkansas may apply. Faith-based organizations may not include projects of a religious nature or statements concerning religion in AmeriCorps member activities. For-profit agencies are not eligible to receive AmeriCorps grants.

Community Initiative of Arkansas Time Line

Date	Activity
April 12, 2013	RFA e-mailed and posted to DHS/DCSNS website
May 17, 2013	Application proposals are due to CIA
May 27-31, 2013	Grant applications reviewed
Mid-Late July 2013	Awarding of sub-grants and notifying the sites
Mid-Late July 2013	Sub-grant paperwork to DHS Office of Finance and Administration
August 2013	Host site supervisors orientation
August -September 15, 2013	Host sites recruit members and initiate background checks
October 1, 2013	CIA program officially starts
October – November 2013	Member Orientation provided at selected host sites
October 2013	Opening Ceremony

Proposals

Before preparing the proposal, applicants should note the following:

1. DCSNS/CIA will not be liable for any costs associated with the preparation of proposals or negotiation of a grant incurred by any applicant.
2. All proposals, in their entirety, will become the property of DCSNS/CIA upon submission.
3. The award of a grant for any proposed program is contingent upon the following:
 - Favorable evaluation of the proposal
 - Recommendation of the proposal by the Governor's Advisory Council on Volunteerism
 - Successful negotiation of any changes to the proposal as required
4. Grantees will be required to assume full responsibility for all specified services and will not under any circumstances subgrant to any other party.
5. The AmeriCorps Member earns a living allowance divided equally over the term of service-- *not salaries or wages*.
6. The host site does not pay unemployment insurance on the AmeriCorps member, nor is the member eligible for unemployment benefits based on AmeriCorps service because no employer/employee relationship exists.
7. If selected, applicant is required to submit an electronic copy of the proposal in Word format.
8. Applicants, if selected, will be required to report monthly by the required deadline.
9. Applicants, if selected, will be required to attend program orientation as well as other trainings conducted by CIA.
10. Applicants, if selected, will be subject to at least one site visit annually conducted by CIA.

Acceptance of Proposals

The grant will be negotiated with the applicants who have the highest scores according to the established criteria (*see **Proposal Guidelines and Selection Criteria on page 6***), whose proposals are the most advantageous to CIA, and are comprehensive and responsive as determined by the review group. Results of the evaluation and the recommendations of the evaluation team will be submitted to CIA for approval. CIA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

Rejection of Proposals

Proposals that do not conform to the requirements of this RFA may be rejected. Proposals may be rejected for reasons that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The proposal contains unauthorized amendments to requirements of the RFA.
- The proposal is conditional.
- The proposal is incomplete, indefinite or ambiguous.
- The proposal is received late.
- The proposal is not signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.
- The proposal contains false or misleading statements or references.
- The proposal does not offer to provide all services required by the RFA.

Technical Assistance

Questions and inquiries regarding the CIA Request for Applications should be addressed to Edet Frank, DHS/DCSNS Asst. Director & CFO, at 501-320-3991 or edet.frank@arkansas.gov.

Proposal Format

- Please assemble the grant application with paper clips, rubber bands, or a binder clip.
- Do not staple or bind any portion of the grant application.
- Use one-inch margins and 12-point font throughout.
- Print double-sided and number all pages.
- Place footer on each page of the proposal with the *Host Site Name* and *Date of Submission*.

Proposal Submission Requirements

An original and eight copies of the completed proposal must be RECEIVED by CIA no later than 4 p.m. on May 17, 2013. Facsimiles will not be accepted. All proposals should be mailed or hand delivered to the following address:

**DHS/Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support
Attn: Edet Frank
Community Initiative of Arkansas
P.O. Box 1437 Slot S230
700 S. Main
Little Rock, AR 72203-1437**

Proposal Guidelines and Selection Criteria (Required Components)

1. Cover Letter (*On Letterhead*)

2. Title Page

3. Executive Summary (5 pts)

Please provide a one-paragraph executive summary of your proposed project. This summary must be one-half page or less. The summary should include who, what, where, when and why:

- Who will be serving? Who will be served? (include projected numbers)
- What will the AmeriCorps member(s) do?
- Where will the activity take place?
- When does the project begin and end?
- What is the expected outcome(s) of the project?

4. Proposal Narrative (40 pts) (12 pages or less, double-spaced):

The proposal narrative should cover the identified need(s), your project plan, your performance measures, your proposed evaluation process, your sustainability plan and your project time line. Number each page of your proposal narrative and provide information in the order listed.

Community Need: Define the scope of your community need that your program proposes to address and supporting evidence of that need. Describe your target population and how you will recruit participants.

Project Plan: Give details about the project(s) to be accomplished.

Use the following sections to describe your proposed project plan. Be sure to answer all questions related to each section. In assessing Project Plan, CIA grant reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly articulated and convincingly linked these three major elements.

A. AmeriCorps Member Roles and Responsibilities:

- What will your member(s) do? Provide a brief position description for the member.
- What is the added value of the member's service?
- How many members are you requesting?

B. AmeriCorps Member Selection and Training:

- What are your plans for recruiting member(s)?
- What is your plan for orienting your member(s) to the community they are serving and the service they will perform?
- Describe any training you plan to offer the member(s).

C. AmeriCorps Member Supervision and Support:

- Who will be the on-site supervisor(s) for the member(s)?

- How many hours per week will direct supervision of the member(s) be provided?
- Indicate a designated mentor/teacher responsible for personal support and development of the member(s).
- Where will the project be located? Describe the workspace to be assigned to the member.
- What resources will be made available to the member(s) to ensure the success of the project? (Ex: fax machine, computer, internet)

5. Performance Measures (35 pts):

For each performance measure, give activities and time lines to complete this goal. You will be expected to report on these measures quarterly.

Performance measures:

- Clearly state a time-framed, measurable activity
- Clearly identify both participants and recipients of the activity
- Give concrete details about what success looks like and how success will be measured, including tools or methods

Host Sites must choose:

Mandatory Performance Measure A: AmeriCorps members will recruit volunteers to assist with planning, organizing, and implementing monthly service projects. *NOTE: CIA members are required to implement a service project for MLK Day, 9/11 and AmeriCorps Week.*

And choose at least one of the following measures:

Mandatory Performance Measure B: AmeriCorps member(s) will provide mentoring to disadvantaged youth and/or adults.

Mandatory Performance Measure C: AmeriCorps member(s) will conduct health education activities/programs and survey participants to assess changes in knowledge of healthy living.

Evaluation Plan: For each performance measurement state how the outcome will be evaluated and measured and state change you want to see by the end of the grant cycle.

NOTE: Report cards must be used as the measurement tool for youth in mentoring programs and surveys must be used as the measurement tool for youth in health education activities/programs.

6. Project Time Line (5 pts):

The time line should include all project activities and dates for their proposed completion.

The time line will be evaluated according to its degree of:

- a. Completeness - all major project activities and milestones are included.
- b. Specificity - it is clear at each point about what will be achieved/completed and when.

c. Reasonableness - performance measure and activities noted can be accomplished within the given time frame.

7. Continuation/Sustainability Plan (5 pts): Provide a plan for continuing/sustaining the AmeriCorps member's project after CIA funding ends. Include specific steps that will be taken to search for and provide the necessary resource base for your program.

8. Signed Budget Page and Budget Narrative (10 pts):

The funds awarded to the host site for the AmeriCorps Member are for living allowance and other member support costs. The budget must show grantee match. The host site will submit invoices on a monthly basis to the CIA Program Director.

Submit a prepared budget to show how the funds will be distributed. Use the Sample Budget as a guide.

Use the Budget Narrative template to explain each budget line item and include the calculation on how the amount was derived. This form translates each budget line item into easy to understand descriptive terms.

9. Required Appendices:

- a. Three (3) Letters of Support from community partners
- b. Completed AmeriCorps Host Site Application with signature
- c. Copy of your organization's Drug Free Workplace Policy

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Each copy of your application contains:

- ☐ **Cover Letter**(*Use letterhead*)
- ☐ **Title Page**
- ☐ **Executive Summary (one-half page max.)**
 - ☐ Primary mission of the organization
 - ☐ Proposed activities and performance measures
 - ☐ Projected number of children participants
 - ☐ Projected number of adult volunteers
- ☐ **Proposal Narrative (max. 12 double-spaced pages)**
 - ☐ Community Needs
 - ☐ Project Plan / Performance Measures / Activities
 - ☐ Evaluation Plan
 - ☐ Continuation / Sustainability Plan
 - ☐ Project Time Line
 - ☐ Prepared Budget with signature
 - ☐ Completed Budget Narrative
- ☐ **Required Appendices**
 - ☐ Letters of support from at least three (3) Community Partners
 - ☐ Completed AmeriCorps Host Site Application with signature
 - ☐ A copy of your agency's drug free workplace policy.
- ☐ **Required Format**
 - ☐ This application is assembled with paper clips, rubber bands, or a binder clip.
 - ☐ This application uses one-inch margins and 12 point font throughout.
 - ☐ Print double-sided and number all pages.
 - ☐ This application has footer on each page with the Host Site name and date of submission.
 - ☐ This application consists of one unbound original and eight copies.

An original and eight copies of the completed proposal must be RECEIVED by CIA no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 17, 2013. Facsimiles will not be accepted. The applications should be mailed to or hand delivered to the following address:

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AMERICORPS MEMBERS PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Prohibited Activities. While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

- a. Attempting to influence legislation;
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- f. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
- g. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
- h. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - i. A business organized for profit;
 - ii. A labor union;
 - iii. A partisan political organization;
 - iv. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
- i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
- k. Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.